

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 16, 2012

WILLIAM A. BRIGGS BUILDING (REED CONFERENCE ROOM)

845 PARK AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:00 P.M.

PUBLIC SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

**PUBLIC WORK SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PUBLIC
SESSION**

MINUTES

The meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the above date with the following members present: Chairperson Iannazzi, Mr. Lombardi, Mrs. McFarland, Mrs. Ruggieri, and Mrs. Culhane. Absent were Mr. Traficante and Mr. Bloom. Attorney Ronald Cascione was also present.

This meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and convened to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws PL 42-46-5(a) (1) Personnel (Discussion of Non-certified Administrator); (Discussion of Certified Administrator)(Consolidation of Human Resources with the School Department and the City); PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation; (Contract Negotiations' Update – Secretaries), (Maintenance of Effort), (Consideration of legal options regarding status of aid to education appropriation and legal advice relating to same).

Call to Order – Public Session was called to order at 7:20 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

The roll was called; a quorum was present. No votes were taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session minutes sealed – May 16, 2012

A motion to seal these minutes was made by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Mrs. Culhane. All were in favor.

Resolution in Support of 2012 S-2876 (sponsored by Senator Joshua Miller and the Senate) and Corresponding Enabling House Legislation - for a Defined Contribution Pension Plan for the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) Local 153

NO. 12-5-1 - Whereas, Cranston Public Schools' employees, who are members of the (NAGE) Local 153, are currently members of the State Municipal Employees Retirement System (a defined benefits pension plan) and:

Whereas, the Cranston School Committee negotiated a collective bargaining agreement with NAGE whereby the union members have agreed to end the defined benefits pension for any newly hired members and replace it with a defined contribution plan established by the Cranston School Department and;

Whereas, the Cranston School Committee recognizes that the pension issue is an important long term structural issue that cities and towns, particularly the Cranston School Department, must address and;

Whereas, the Cranston School Committee requests enabling

legislation (S-2876 and Corresponding House Legislation) from the General Assembly to allow the School Department to start such a defined contribution plan consistent with the collective bargaining agreement with NAGE and;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cranston School Committee respectfully requests the Rhode Island General Assembly to pass S-2876 and Corresponding Enabling House Legislation to allow the School Department to start such a defined contribution plan and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cranston School Committee is hereby instructed to submit a copy of this resolution to the City of Cranston's State Senators and State Representatives in the Rhode Island General Assembly seeking their support.

A motion to approve this resolution was made by Mr. Lombardi and seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri. All were in favor.

Adjourn to Public Work Session

Public Work Session

a. CEAB Initiatives

Mrs. Culhane stated – in working with CEAB these last several years, last year they had a strong powerful vision. They had a great board, every meeting was well attended and then this year they didn't have a representative. They had no vision or mission. The question that they asked me to ask the committee is what is our vision as the people who are the creative body; we created CEAB, what is our vision for that group moving forward.

Mrs. Ruggieri stated – CEAB is supposed to go throughout the

district and find out what the issues are in the schools and see if there is something they can work on and then they present it to us. It is not supposed to work the other way. That's how it is supposed to work and I keep telling them that. When they did the survey for the lunch program that was probably the first thing they did from CEAB at least since I have been on the committee. They are questioning what their role is but we are not supposed to really be guiding them in what their role is.

Discussion ensued regarding the role(s) of CEAB.

b. Art Curriculum – Jill Cyr

Ms. Cyr distributed the Art Curriculum to the committee. This was last looked at in 1995. This was the first curriculum to go through the Curriculum Advisory Board.

c. Internet Safety Policy – Donna-Marie Frappier

Dr. Lundsten reviewed the revisions to the Internet Safety policy with the committee.

Mrs. Culhane stated regarding current students friending teachers on Facebook – I would not mind sponsoring that resolution and then coming to the table to discuss. That is one of those management issues where we should have the reigns so I would be more than willing to sponsor that.

It was suggested that Attorney Cascione draft language regarding a social networking policy.

d. Statewide Bullying Policy (Safe School Act)

Dr. Lundsten explained the changes to the committee.

e. Discussion regarding Energy Conservation Programs

Mr. Nero stated – we have one company that is here tonight (initial audit on file submitted for the record) who has contacted us regarding energy conservation programs that are available to us. We have also been contacted by other companies. I thought it would be fair to come to the committee and talk about this issue but as Joel tells me we may not have to go out to bid but I know how you folks have been, whether it is food service, Medicaid or transportation where you feel the fairest way to go it out to bid but Joel is going to explain it.

Mr. Zisseron stated – the company that is here tonight, they are on the State MPA. There are also another number of companies that are on the State MPA so the committee would have to decide if you want to move forward on something like this to give other companies an opportunity to come before you to make a presentation and basically what it is that they are going to come in, they are going to survey certain buildings that you would like to see done such as boilers and it's kind of a finance because what is going to happen is they will finance the project. They are also going to tell you that the savings you are going to have over this period of time will pay for whatever monies they are going to put out for you for the project. It's a nice thing. What it really is they are doing our capital projects without capital money. We're basically borrowing until we pay it up. The other question I have which Joe can't answer tonight is I don't know whether we as a school department can go forward and do a project and borrow money out or pay it out for twenty years because that's

basically what it is, it is a 20 year payout that you are going to pay them or you're going to hope that you save enough money that that monies that you save it going to pay for the project. So there are still a lot of questions that have to be answered if you are interested in doing something like this. As a side note, in two years we are going to be going forward with a repair and renovation bond because we missed the deadline this year. And of course part of that bond is going to be boiler replacements. We have old buildings, old boilers. It's just something to keep in mind with you as a committee will have to decide whether you want to move forward and get more information and data on this.

Mr. Lombardi stated – my feeling is this is best suited for a work session in and of itself where you invite any of the people on that state list but also I can't see how we can engage in a 20 year discussion without having representatives from the City Council here and the mayor's office and I think they have to be part of that joint work session.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – in our experience, particularly with the whole First Student transportation issue, I think that we have realized better proposals when we have put RFP's out. My suggestion would be to put an RFP out. I know I have personally been contacted by three energy companies and I don't want to be involved in selecting them. I think an RFP is advisable.

Mr. Nero stated – in fairness to all, an RFP is in order.

Mr. Zisseron stated – I think we have to find out legally, can we obligate ourselves to a 15-20 year type of....

Mr. Lombardi stated – you can still have a Worksession about it and then you can have...presumably the mayor will come with his lawyers.

Mr. Nero stated – based on these companies, they may come and answer through the RFP and answer a lot of questions.

Mrs. McFarland stated – all the companies that are on the state site, you can send the RFP to and invite them all to the Worksession. Also look to the Council and see if there is an opportunity to bond out with 10-15 years, there may be different terms we can look at and stagger some buildings. There are a lot of different scenarios to work out if everybody is sitting at the table.

Mr. Lombardi stated- then we would get into the ownership of the buildings, we don't own the buildings but may that would be a consolidation of all the buildings.

f. Discussion of Renewal of Sodexo Food Service Contract – not discussed.

g. Monthly Review of Year-to-Date Expenditures – Joseph Balducci

Mr. Balducci reviewed the Year-to-Date expenditures with the committee. He pointed out on page 2 – executive summary - #6 Vocational School Tuition – we estimated that the shortfall in that account would be approximately \$250,000. We did receive our final billing for our out of district schools and unfortunately it came in a little higher, \$273,000. So we will have to adjust for that elsewhere to make up for that additional \$23,000. Same page, under the expenditures #2, Special Education Tuition, again at the end of April

we were projecting a surplus of \$84,907, however, I would like to give you some good news, this time of year we go through every single purchase order for every single student in an outside placement and we make changes upwards or down depending on final billing. My office has gone through that with Cheryl Coogan's assistance and today that surplus has jumped up to \$261,000. So when you get your May report you will see that. Hopefully between now and May nothing else comes in the door.

Our relationship with West Bay has helped. We received our April numbers, cumulative this year we have over a \$2.2 million dollar cumulative surplus for this year with two months left to go. Hopefully this will offset the deficit we had last year.

h. Consolidation of Human Resources with the School Department and the City – not discussed.

Adjourn Public Work Session

A motion to adjourn public work session was made by Mrs. Culhane and seconded by Mrs. McFarland. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank S. Lombardi

Clerk